perpendicular to the optical axis, wherein the portion of the external circumference of the optical filter which forms the stage includes a portion of one of the surfaces of the first and second filter layers that extends in the direction perpendicular to the optical axis.

5. (Twice Amended) An optical device comprising:

a photoelectric converter that converts a subject image formed at a light-receiving surface thereof to an electric signal;

an optical system that forms the subject image with a light flux from a subject at the light-receiving surface of said photoelectric converter;

an optical filter that is provided on an optical path between said photoelectric converter and said optical system to filter the light flux; and

a holding member that holds said optical filter, wherein:

said optical filter comprises a stage formed at least at a portion of an external circumference of the optical filter, and said holding member contacts said stage to hold said optical filter, wherein the portion of the external circumference of the optical filter which forms the stage includes a portion of a surface of the optical filter that extends in a direction perpendicular to an optical axis of the light flux that passes through the optical filter.

6. (Amended) An optical device according to claim 5, wherein:

said holding member has a spring property and holds said optical filter by pressing said optical filter either toward said photoelectric converter or toward said optical system.

7. (Amended) An optical filter according to claim 2, wherein:

said first filter layer is located at a side closer to the subject than said second filter layer; and

a size of the surface of said first filter layer is smaller than a size of the surface of said second filter layer.

9. (Amended) An optical filter according to claim 2, wherein:

said first filter layer is composed of a material more expensive than a material of said second filter layer; and

a size of the surface of said first filter layer is smaller than a size of the surface of said second filter layer.

10. (Amended) An optical filter according to claim 2, wherein:

said second filter layer is composed of a material stronger than a strength of a material of said first filter layer; and

a size of the surface of said first filter layer is smaller than a size of the surface of said second filter layer.

REMARKS

Claims 2, 3 and 5-11 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 2, 5-7, 9 and 10 are amended. The attached Appendix includes a marked-up copy of each rewritten claim (37 C.F.R. §1.121(c)(1)(ii)).

Independent claim 2 has been amended to clarify that the portion of the external circumference of the optical filter which forms the stage includes a portion of one of the surfaces of the first and second filter layers that extends in a direction perpendicular to the optical axis. Independent claim 5 has been amended to clarify that the portion of the external circumference of the optical filter which forms the stage includes a portion of a surface of the optical filter that extends in a direction perpendicular to an optical axis of the light flux that passes through the optical filter. These amendments are supported throughout the original specification and drawings. See, for example, page 15, line 21 - page 16, line 9 of the specification, the portions of the surface of layer 103 that forms stages 107 and 108 in Figs. 2-3, and the portions of the surface of layer 103 that forms either of the stages 109 and 110 in Figs. 5A and 5B. The claims also have been amended in a non-narrowing manner in